

FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATING – EMPLOYER BRANDING & TALENT SOURCING

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: 08 Jan 2017;

Received in revised form:
23 Jan 2017;

Accepted: 24 Jan 2017;

Published online: 24 Jan 2017.

Key words:

Employer Brand,
Employee Value Proposition,
Talent Life cycle,
Talent Sourcing,
New Hire.

ABSTRACT

In the competitive market place, organizations are fighting battles on all fronts i.e., building & retaining market share, stakeholder satisfaction and more importantly recruiting & retaining best talent. The war for talent is influenced by employer brand which in turn is influenced by Employee Value Proposition (EVP). This research paper looks at various dimensions of employer branding and the relationship between employer value proposition and its influence on the talent sourcing. It examines the dimensions of employer branding across talent sourcing cycle and metrics that can be used for assessing the efficiency & impact of employer branding on talent sourcing by the organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

According to wikipedia, Employer Brand refers to the reputation of the organization as employer, and is influenced by the value proposition the organization offers to its employees. The term was introduced early 1990s. Minchington described it as “image of the organization” and as an “employer of choice” among the key stake holders (active and passive candidates, clients/customers and other key stakeholders), The core influencing factor of Employer brand is the Employee Value Proposition. The root word is Customer Value Proposition (CVP) which refers to a well-defined and persuasive marketing statement related to the product or service. It refers to the perceived/actual benefits that the customer would derive from buying the product or service. It is used to target and attract the customers and not to the distributors, staff and suppliers. Organizations are increasingly finding the challenge of improving the efficiency and efforts of talent sourcing efforts, in terms of various dimensions such as cost, quality of candidates, Turnaround time (TAT) for closing the positions, Performance & retention of the new hires.

1.1 Objectives:

The objectives of the study are:-

- What are the dimensions of employer branding
- How does employer branding impact talent sourcing
- How can employer branding be integrated across talent sourcing
- Dimension of employer branding across talent sourcing channels

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper is based on descriptive study and is based on secondary data i.e., research carried out various researchers in the areas of Employer Branding, Employee Value Talent Sourcing and effectiveness of talent sourcing, strategic sourcing.

2.1 Literature & Conceptual Review

In the research study aimed at probing the impact of EVP on business outcomes (Heger Brian K, 2007) have identified that EVP influences employee engagement and retention, both of which have positive impact on the business results of an organization. Mckinsey Quarterly have identified that superior EVP are able to identify and attract “right fit” talent. Another research paper has identified that employer brand refers to the efforts of an organization to promote itself both to internal and external employee segments. The research article titled “A stakeholder’s perspective of the value proposition concept” has identified that EVP helps in co-creation of value with the stakeholders. Pratiba Goswami (2015) in her research paper has identified that EVP helps in identifying and attracting right talent for the organization.

In the white paper (2015) Prof Paul and Dr Lillian have approached Employer Branding from the perspective of broader HR Proposition and studied it from three dimensions I,em 1) as a form of psychological contract, 2) form of social identity and 3) form of tow-way signalling to existing and propsoetctive employees. They have identified Employer Branding as a 3 step process 1) Developemnt of value proposition based on orgabization’s culture, style of management, profile of existing employees, and quality of products and service quality of the organization. 2) External maketing of the value propositon of the brand primarily to atract right-talent 3) Internal marketing of employer branding on the “brand promise” embedded into the culture and its commitment of the values and goals to the employees.

Dr Chitramani & Deepa (2013) in their study of employer brand of three indian IT firms Infosys, TCS and Wipro have identified they have developed their Employer Brand as USP based on HR practices and culture. Infosys had leveraged on “middle-class turning into millionaires’, Wipro is viewed as ‘take-off point for entrepreneurs’ and TCS is viewed as “training ground for freshers”. Chlo’e & S’ébastien (2013) in their research study in Fraance, on Gen Y Preferences and its impact on Employer Branding have idnetified that they prefer Job Security and relaxed environment and that their expectations are heterogenous.

Prieska Kharisma in her research study on Employer Branding, has identified that it is important that organization works on creating unique brand identity (social identity) that for employer branding, employees (both current and prospective) identify with the

brand identification features. These features include socially constructed through thoughts, feelings, and comportments of individuals and group members.

Suman & Suparna (2010) in their research on employer branding and studied internal and external branding practices of Indian organization like TATA steel, Ceat, TCS and have leveraged on their inherent strengths and practices to create an employer brand, Gaye (2015) in his research on engagement & retention of millennials has identified that HR practices have a major role in internal branding. He studied the employee expectations from the cohorts of baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y. The expectations of millennials are 1) meaningful employment; 2) Technology integrated workplace; 3) Flexible work environment; and 4) fast track career opportunities.

Dr Venkatesh (2015) in his comparative study of CSR practices has identified that organization ethos, leadership and culture have a deep influence on CSR practices of organization and also on the People Practices in organization.

CIPD in their survey on Employer branding has identified the various practices being adopted by organizations for the purpose of employer branding i.e., 1) Campus Hiring; 2) Diversity Communications; 3) Compensation & benefits Strategy; 4) IT Technology and communications; 5) Physical working environment; 6) Public Relations; 7) Performance Management; 8) Career Website; 9) Leadership & Management Behaviors; 10) Learning & Development opportunities/initiatives; 11) Employee Communications; and 12) Recruitment advertising. The expected outcomes of employer brand as identified by participating organizations in the survey in the order of priority are 1) Alignment to Vision/Values; 2) Improve Recruitment Performance; 3) Compete for Talent (labour); 4) Increase Employee Satisfaction; 5) Improve productivity/delivery; 6) Reduce attrition; and 7) Reduce HR Costs.

2.2 Gaps in Research

The research papers focussed on talent attraction, engagement and retention from a strategic context not in detail with respect to talent sourcing cycle and steps involved, and it is here this research paper presents a holistic and integrated framework that helps to improve and functional and performance efficiency of talent sourcing efforts of organizations.

2.3 Talent Sourcing Process

The talent sourcing process has the following stages:-

Stage	Activity in the stage	Responsibility
Talent Review & Planning	The senior leadership reviews the business environment and the talent needs of the organization. In the case of positive business environment and large gap/need for talent, the organization will adopt an aggressive strategy towards talent planning. The talent planning will indicate the talent across levels, skill-sets that the organization intends to recruit across quarterly and annual basis.	Senior Leadership
Talent Sourcing Strategy	Once the talent requirements across levels and skill-sets is finalized, the organization	Talent sourcing/Acquisition

	decides on the channel sourcing analysis. In this analysis, the factors such as channels where the organizations hires regularly and where the brand recall value is preferred. Another major influencing factor is the talent pool required and the effective channel for sourcing them. The dimensions of analysis are cost of sourcing, retention rate, performance of the talent hired from the channel	ion team (TA)
Talent sourcing	In this stage, the TA team sources the channels through the steps of advertising, sourcing & screening of CVs, conduction of selection process, shortlisting and offering to shortlisted candidates.	TA Team
Talent Onboarding	In this stage, the TA team, after offer-roll out, continues to stay in touch with the offered candidates, and facilitates their onboarding into the organization.	TA & Hiring Manager

2.4 OPP Framework for Integrating Employer Branding & Talent Sourcing

The key factors impacting the Employer branding can broadly be categorized into a) Organizational factors; b) People Factor; and c) Process Factors.



The three key **organizational factors** are a) market reputation of firm's products and services b) Reputation & visibility of senior leaders & their thought leadership and c) engagement of the organization with educational institutions. The market reputation for the products and services is a major influencing factor in employer branding. Organizations whose products and services are viewed by the existing and prospective employees positively. The candidates will be keen to consider the organization as a potential employment opportunity. At the same time the candidates will be work with such organization at a lower compensation. This factor impact the number of applications.

The **People Factors** are a) feedback of the existing employees b) feedback of new hires and c) candidates feedback and d) Channel partner feedback. The employee feedback is a major contributor to employer branding. In the socially networked world, employees share the experience of working with an organization through social networks and specific networks like glassdoor. Employee referral is the most powerful channel through which organization hires are hiring talent. The employee referral channel has multiple advantages such as cost-effectiveness, high conversion rates across stages of recruitment, Further this then the quality of candidates and retention of new hires is high as compared to other sourcing channels. The new hires go through a phase of cognitive dissonance after joining the organization. They tend to compare the quality of association with an organization with that of previous experience and also the experience of their friends and acquaintance in other organizations. The candidates who go through the selection process share their feedback with their peers/friends and this has major influence on employer branding. The channel partner is another major factor influencing the employer brand. Some firms as a part of the candidate relationship management tend to collect feedback from the candidates about the organizations, with whom they underwent a selection process. In case of campus hiring, the seniors and placement committee members have a major say in the way the organization is perceived by the students in the campus.

The **Process factors** are a) Presence of organization across sourcing channels b) candidate engagement & c) Process efficiency. The presence of organization across sourcing channels, helps it get positive word of mouth publicity for the organization. However, factors to be evaluated are channel vs talent pool availability, sourcing budgets and number of people to be hired. To reap the benefits of its presence, organizations have to plan for candidate engagement, through videos, release of bytes, constant communication on status of the process and candidature. In the fast paced and competitive world, speed and efficiency are the key influencers of candidate perception about an organization. Organizations that take a lot of time (Turn Around Time – TAT) for the entire sourcing cycle or stages in the process/cycle will lose out the talent, as the talent may go ahead with other options that get from other organizations.

The metrics that can be used across talent sourcing stages are detailed below:-

Impacting factor on talent sourcing	Dimension	Metrics
Organizational Factor	Market reputation of firm's products and services	Customer feedback/satisfaction on products & services
	Reputation & Visibility of senior leaders & their thought leadership	Number of major events that senior leaders were present
	Engagement with educational Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of occasions that senior leaders have visited the campus Sponsorship of college events by the

		<p>organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum/syllabus alignment in line with competence needs of the organizations
People Factor	Existing Employee Feedback	Employee engagement score in internal or external surveys
	New hire Feedback	New hire feedback on selection process, onboarding process and job satisfaction
	Candidate Feedback	Candidate feedback on quality of process, feedback on HR, hiring manager, turn around time of the process and stages
Process Factor	Presence of organizations across sourcing Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sourcing channels through which the organization sources Sourcing channel and talent presence alignment
	Candidate engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of videos/bytes uploaded on social networks/sourcing channels Relationship management by sourcing team members
	Process efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time taken for the overall process (Process TAT) TAT for various stages in the process Hiring managers feedback on sourcing process and candidate quality

CONCLUSION

In the competitive and dynamic world, organizations have to fight for talent in the market place. Their efforts for talent sourcing and acquisition are influenced by the employer brand of the organization. This research paper focusses in detailing the integrated efforts towards employer branding through various steps. The framework suggested in the paper can be tested through a primary survey to validate and firm up the framework.

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